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Chairman: Mr. Rosenthal ..... (Guatemala)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 116: Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 123: Human resources management (*continued*) (A/55/798 and Add.1)

1. **Mr. Lenefors** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union and noting that the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia aligned themselves with his statement, said that any discussion of the reform of human resources management at the United Nations and across the United Nations system must take into consideration the situation of young professionals. The fact was that there seemed to be more resignations at the low or medium level of professional staff than retirements and that there were doubts regarding the capacity of the Organization to fill the vacuum left by that attrition.

2. The report highlighted the need to improve conditions of service. The European Union acknowledged the importance of a career perspective and the continued development of mentoring, which would increase the motivation of staff and encourage them to stay on. The resignations of qualified staff members whose recruitment had involved an extensive and costly process represented a serious loss for the Organization.

3. It was also essential to speed up recruitment, including from the roster, as recommended in the report. Successful candidates in the national competitive examination were not willing, or sometimes, not able, to wait for an extended period of time for a call from the United Nations if other opportunities arose in the meantime. The Office of Human Resources Management should therefore continue to devote serious efforts to improving its recruitment system.

4. **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention contained in document A/55/798 and largely endorsed its recommendations.

5. Regarding recommendation 3 on the speeding up of recruitment processes by imposing strict deadlines for the review of applications by managers and the placement of candidates, he said that deadlines should not be so tight as to be counterproductive. He sought clarification from the Secretariat on the likely implications of the proposal in recommendation 4 (b) that, in order to reduce the number of candidates currently on rosters, examinations should automatically be suspended in occupational groups for which the roster exceeded a predetermined number of candidates. He expressed surprise that, while the General Assembly had yet to take a decision on mobility, recommendation 8 called for greater mobility not only between departments but also between duty stations and referred to a Managed Reassignment Programme, as though a concept of mobility was already in place.

6. Lastly, he noted with concern the comment of the Advisory Committee on Coordination in paragraph 4 of document A/55/798/Add.1 that zero nominal growth over the past decade had impacted negatively on organizations' capacity to design organizational structures and jobs suitable for young professionals. There was also a need to take into account, in that connection, the evolving expectations of the younger workforce with respect to such things as opportunities to develop skills, chances for promotion and spouse employment.

7. He wondered why the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat had not been included in the most recent programme of work. Nor did he understand the reasons for the late submission of the Secretary-General's comments on a report. Had they been submitted on time, both JIU reports could have been considered in the context of the draft resolution on human resources management.

8. **Ms. Salim** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management), said that the Managed Reassignment Programme had been introduced with a view to broadening the career development prospects of staff recruited at the P-2 level under National Competitive Recruitment Examinations. It was covered under Staff Regulation 1.2 (c) and was applicable to P-2 staff recruited as from the beginning of 2000, who were expected to carry out two different functions, generally at two different duty stations, in their first five years of service. Staff

recruited prior to that time could apply for such transfers on a purely voluntary basis. Other aspects of staff mobility had not been implemented pending the outcome of the General Assembly resolution on the Secretary-General's reform package.

9. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), said that, on adopting the agenda for its current session, the Advisory Committee had decided to consider reports of the Joint Inspection Unit under the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget. Thus, the report on the review of management and administration in the Registry of the International Court of Justice (A/55/834 and Add.1) would be considered under section 7 and the report on the United Nations system common services at Geneva (A/55/856) would be taken up under the relevant subsection of section 27 on the United Nations Office at Geneva. The report entitled "Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention" (A/55/798 and Add.1) as well as the report on the delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat (A/55/857) would be considered under section 27C of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. Indeed, the Fifth Committee had already taken a decision concerning the recruitment of young professionals, within the context of the rejuvenation of the Organization, on which there had been an exchange of views with the Secretary-General the preceding day.

10. In its report on human resources management reform, accountability and responsibility, personal practices and policies and management irregularities, the Advisory Committee had stressed the importance, in formulating and implementing human resources action plans, of giving priority to ensuring a systematic rejuvenation of the Secretariat and of retaining younger staff, particularly in the light of the age profile of the staff in the Organization (A/55/499, para. 5). Its general comments on the issue of rejuvenation had been made within the context of the reports of the Secretary-General on human resources management reform (A/55/253); the matter would be considered again under the proposed programme budget.

11. Should the Committee decide to consider the report on delegation of authority from a policy perspective, that would not preclude it from analysing the report under section 27C of the proposed programme budget. The Advisory Committee had commented on the issue of delegation of authority, particularly in chapter I of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001; it took the issue very seriously. In fact, a number of Joint Inspection Unit's comments virtually reproduced those of the Advisory Committee.

12. **Mr. Mezzalama** (Joint Inspection Unit) said that while the report of the Joint Inspection Unit provided an overview of the situation and problems in the various entities of the United Nations system with regard to the recruitment of young professionals, it was in no way intended to impose standards, rigid rules or strict principles on individual organizations. It was encouraging that at least some of the professionals who had resigned had been recruited under temporary contracts. The decline in resignations of permanent staff members was also a very positive sign. JIU had been given assurances that every effort was being made to shorten the roster and accelerate the placement of candidates who had passed the National Competitive Recruitment Examination. The very sensitive issue of accompanying family members must be addressed urgently; young professionals forced to choose between family and work accounted for a considerable proportion of resignations.

13. Replying to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, he said that, while rigid deadlines could be counterproductive, some form of action must be taken to reduce the waiting time for successful candidates on the roster. Consistent with recommendation 4 (b), greater attention would be paid to the Organization's needs in various professional areas before administering examinations. The application of that measure had thus far shrunk the waiting list considerably. The question concerning recommendation 8 had already been explained by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management.

14. **Mr. Abdalla** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, while young professionals deserved to have opportunities, the Organization must not overlook its own need for very experienced staff members in many cases, nor should it disregard the dedicated service of its own ageing staff members. It could not in good conscience convene a Second World Assembly on Ageing, which would advocate, inter alia, employment for older persons, if it did not treat its own staff

properly. Instead of replacing older staff members, it should provide them with training in the use of new technology and in other areas necessary to keep pace with modern developments. Citing Article 8 and Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, he expressed concern about potential discrimination against older candidates in the actual recruitment process as well.

15. **Mr. Mezzalama** (Joint Inspection Unit) said that the fact that the Organization was seeking to recruit young professionals did not deny others the right to employment. However, some structure for the selection of personnel was needed to ensure that the best and most qualified persons were recruited. By rejuvenation of the staff, the Secretary-General meant that persons reaching the age of retirement should be replaced by qualified young people. That did not mean that older people would be chased out.

16. **Mr. Abdalla** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) agreed that there was a need for a rigorous selection process; he was opposed to a system of selection based on connections. Regrettably, rejuvenation in the Secretariat was being pursued in part through pressure and inducements such as settlement packages to encourage staff to retire so that they could be replaced by younger persons. The system of promotion by seniority no longer obtained and long-serving staff members now had to apply to fill vacancies. The Organization should not sacrifice its staff for the sake of injecting new blood into the system.

17. **Mr. Mirmohammad** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, asked whether there would be any objection to taking up the report of JIU on the delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources.

18. **The Chairman** said that there did not appear to be any.

19. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) noted, for the record, that it was not the first time that the consideration of reports related to human resources had been delayed because of the late issuance of the related report of the Advisory Committee. He supported the proposal made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran that the JIU report on the delegation of authority be considered. It should be considered within the context of human resources reform. He would like to hear the Secretariat's views on recommendation 6 of the JIU report contained in document A/55/857.

20. **Ms. Salim** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) requested more time to study the matter.

Agenda item 129: Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (*continued*) (A/55/844 and Corr.1 and A/55/879)

Agenda item 130: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991) (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (*continued*) (A/55/810, A/55/811 and A/55/874 and Add.2)

Agenda item 132: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (*continued*) (A/55/853, A/55/869, A/55/735 and A/55/874)

Agenda item 133: Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (*continued*) (A/55/724, A/55/833, A/55/697 and A/55/874 and Add.6)

Agenda item 135: Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (*continued*) (A/55/764, A/55/794 and A/55/874 and Add.7)

Agenda item 136: Financing of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (*continued*) (A/55/816 and Corr.1 and A/55/880)

Agenda item 137: Financing of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (*continued*) (A/55/390 and A/55/870)

Agenda item 138: Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East (*continued*)

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (*continued*) (A/55/747, A/55/778, A/55/874 and Add.1)

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (*continued*) (A/55/757, A/55/874 and A/55/885)

Agenda item 140: Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters (*continued*) (A/55/840 and A/55/886)

Agenda item 143: Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (*continued*) (A/55/739, A/55/788 and A/55/874 and Add.3)

Agenda item 144: Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (*continued*) (A/55/682, A/55/768 and A/55/874 and Add.4)

Agenda item 148: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (*continued*) (A/55/683, A/55/752 and A/55/874 and Add.5)

Agenda item 150: Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (*continued*) (A/55/753, A/55/667 and A/55/881)

Agenda item 152: Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (*continued*) (A/55/849 and A/55/884)

Agenda item 176: Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (*continued*) (A/55/874)

Agenda item 153: Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*)

(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (*continued*) (A/55/697, A/55/714, A/55/735, A/55/812, A/55/828, A/55/830, A/55/845, A/55/861, A/55/862, A/55/874 and Add.8, A/55/882, A/55/883; A/C.5/55/40 and Corr.1)

21. **Mr. Jara** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, said that the Group supported the recommendations contained in the reports of the Advisory Committee on financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/55/874 and Add.1-8) aimed at enhancing the efficiency of mission administrations and providing training for mission personnel in the fields of resource management, recruitment, procurement and mission liquidations. With regard to the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the management audit of United Nations civilian police operations (A/55/812), given the large number of police personnel deployed in the field, the Rio Group welcomed the management audit, which was aimed at enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the police component of peacekeeping missions.

22. Enhancing the effectiveness of the functioning of peacekeeping operations required political will; that will should be translated into the provision of adequate resources for each of the current peacekeeping operations to enable them to fulfil their respective mandates and to ensure the security of mission personnel.

23. Delays in the reimbursement of troop contributors, most of which were developing countries, imposed a heavy burden on such countries. Should that situation continue, it could affect the participation of developing countries in future peacekeeping operations. A significant portion of the income to be derived from payment of the arrears owed by the main contributor should therefore be allocated for reimbursements. In some cases, reimbursements were owed for operations that had been liquidated several years previously.

24. The Rio Group looked forward to the completion of the comprehensive review of the methods of work, priorities, structure and personnel of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with a view to identifying ways of enhancing the latter's effectiveness. The review should be considered by the competent organs of the General Assembly before it was taken up by the Fifth Committee.

25. With regard to the recruitment of additional personnel for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, account should be taken not only of the principle of equitable geographic distribution but also of professionalism and adequate experience in the civil, military and police fields.

26. **Mr. Yamanaka** (Japan) said that peacekeeping operations continued to play a critical role in the maintenance of international peace and security. As those operations had increased in size and scope in recent years, the importance of financing had also grown. The budget was an important tool for

management of the Organization and the General Assembly had decided in resolution 49/233 that budget estimates for peacekeeping operations with budgetary requirements subject to fluctuation would be considered and approved by the General Assembly twice a year. The questions that arose therefore were whether the Assembly could accept the fact that five peacekeeping operations did not submit budgets and whether it should provide the Secretary-General with commitment authority without a report requesting such authority. Lastly, his delegation wished to emphasize the importance of adhering to the normal peacekeeping budgetary cycles set out in that resolution.

27. **Mr. Zackheos** (Cyprus) welcomed the efforts being made by the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) to achieve greater economy in its operations. Since 1992, Cyprus had voluntarily contributed an amount equal to one third of the budget of UNFICYP and would again do so for the current financial year, despite the heavy burden which such payments imposed on the people of Cyprus. The situation had been exacerbated in recent years due to changes in the exchange rate between the United States dollar and the Cypriot pound and would be further exacerbated as a result of the recent increase in the assessed contributions of Cyprus to the regular and peacekeeping budgets. His Government was therefore exploring ways of reducing the level of its contribution to the budget of UNFICYP.

28. He wished to remind the Committee, however, that Turkey, whose illegal military presence in Cyprus made the presence of UNFICYP on the island absolutely essential, not only did not contribute to the solution of the Cyprus problem but was not even fulfilling its obligation to pay its assessed contributions to UNFICYP. It had made no payments since 1993.

29. With reference to the report of the Secretary-General on the budget of UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 (A/55/788), he wished to remind the Secretariat of the need to use the proper language when referring to the political mandate of the Mission so that the language did not deviate from the parameters set by the Security Council on the question of Cyprus.

30. **Mr. Fox** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of New Zealand and Canada, said that, given the rising level of the peacekeeping budget and the need to make decisions about funds for peacekeeping considerably in advance of the bills becoming due, the Governments on whose behalf he spoke attached great importance to receiving regular and accurate 12-month forecasts of estimated budgetary requirements. The ability of Member States to pay on time would be enhanced if the Secretariat provided them with a 12-month advance billing schedule indicating roughly when it expected to issue assessments for particular operations. The current arrangements were characterized by a large element of surprise and were not particularly satisfactory.

31. In view of the large number of reports before the Committee, the Secretariat should make proposals for streamlining the reporting burden. In line with the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, the Secretariat intended to apply results-based budgeting to future support account proposals. It should take the opportunity of that change to review the need for the current volume of reports.

32. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had been pleased to note, from the report of the Secretary-General on the budget of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) (A/55/778), that some of the concerns expressed in General Assembly resolution 54/266 had been met. Others, however, such as the improvement of the working conditions of the local staff remained to be addressed.

33. In particular, his delegation wished to place on record its strong reservations with respect to what the Secretariat had regarded as responding to the mandate of resolution 54/266. The provision of a transportation benefit which had been factored in the net salaries, in accordance with the salary survey methodology, and the Force's provision of transport for its staff from Damascus to Camp Faouar had not been done in response to the mandate incorporated in resolution 54/266 since they had been in effect before the resolution was adopted. Moreover, the Secretariat's understanding of paragraph 2 of the resolution, as reflected in paragraph 33 (a) of the report (A/55/778), was erroneous. The Assembly had said nothing about the provision of a hardship allowance or of hazard pay. In adopting the same view of the issue, the Advisory Committee had, in paragraph 24 of its report (A/55/874/Add.1), made the same mistake as the Secretariat.

34. The General Assembly had also requested the (in resolution 53/226, para. 8) the Secretary-General in

order to reduce the cost of employing General Service staff, to continue efforts to employ local staff for the Force against General Service posts, commensurate with the requirements of the Force. Nothing had yet been done to meet this request, and the Advisory Committee had not addressed the matter. His delegation requested clarification of the statement that "Following a review of the situation of posts, and for operational reasons, no conversion of General Service staff posts into local staff posts is possible at this time" (A/55/778, para. 27). It would also like to know the nature of the current circumstances that were preventing the replacement of General Service posts by local posts.

35. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the commitment of the UNDOF administration to continuing its ongoing dialogue with the local staff with a view to identifying and addressing issues of staff concern (A/55/778, para. 34), and that work had begun on many improvements in the working conditions of the local staff. Finally, he said that the time had come for the General Assembly to consider the question of increasing the number of in-grade steps for local staff from 10 to 14.

36. **Mr. Chandra** (India) said that he noted from the figures presented in the budget for the support account and by the Controller and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee that the overall increase in fund requirements for 2002 in respect of 2000 would amount to 76 per cent. Towards the end of 2000, the Controller had projected a figure of approximately $2 billion, yet the current projection was in the order of $3.4 billion. He also noted that at the current session, only one third of total requirements for 2001-2002 would be considered for approval. He was pleased that the legislative changes introduced by the Assembly had resulted in the presentation of the budget in a better and more orderly fashion. He complimented the Advisory Committee and its Chairman for two particularly good reports (A/55/882 and A/55/874). His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that there was an urgent need to improve the capacity of the Secretariat to recruit and place civilian personnel in missions in a timely manner in order to reduce the level of unencumbered resources for peacekeeping operations resulting from a high level of vacancies in civilian posts. The need for such action was clearly brought out in the table shown on page 23 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/55/874). His delegation also agreed that the unencumbered balance of $175.2 million should be credited to Member States.

37. The Secretariat needed to make improvements in regard to contingent-owned equipment procedures, as well as in its capacity to manage the liquidation of missions more efficiently. With regard to reforms in reimbursements to Member States for contingent-owned equipment and troop costs, he said it was to be hoped that additional resulting expenditures would be reflected either in the performance reports or the budget estimates immediately after the rates were approved at the current session.

38. His delegation agreed in general terms with the proposals for funding under the support account contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/862), but wished to point out that the comprehensive review might necessitate significant changes. Any changes that might be required as a result of the review should be included in the support account for the period. It would like to have a copy of the guidelines for cooperation between peacekeeping operations and humanitarian and human rights elements mentioned in paragraph 19 (b) and it supported the creation of the civilian police division, with the three organizational units (para. 40). With regard to outstanding tasks in the field administration and logistics division, he understood that none of the 93 posts approved by the General Assembly had been filled. If that was correct, it was regrettable. All posts for the claims section should be filled expeditiously. He noted that while paragraph 9 referred to the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, it did not mention the fact that the report in question also identified the areas where an emergency increase in staffing could take place.

39. His delegation looked forward to receiving a copy of the statement made by the Controller at the 58th meeting of the Fifth Committee.

40. **Mr. Yeo** (Director, Peacekeeping Financing Division), responding to a concern raised by the representative of Japan with regard to the submission of budgets for missions subject to fluctuation, said that the letter dated 22 March 2001 from the Controller to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (A/55/874, annex 5) explained the situation. As indicated in that letter and in the appendix thereto, the Secretariat could have produced initial maintenance-level budgets for those missions, but such budgets would have almost

immediately been overtaken by events. Bridging financing was therefore being requested as an exceptional measure.

41. The representatives of Japan and Australia had, from slightly different perspectives, raised the question of the need for regular and accurate forecasting in a period of change such as the present one, and the impact of such actions on the 12-month billing cycle. He pointed out that General Assembly resolution 49/233 established an annualized budget cycle; however, the assessment of the annualized budget remained unchanged, and assessments could only be made on the basis of mandate extensions. From that standpoint, therefore, independently of whether commitment authorities or normal budgets were concerned, the assessments approach remained unchanged.

42. On the matter of forecasting, he said that the figure of $2.5 billion provided by the Secretariat in March had been accurate based on the information that had been available at the time. The Controller had since updated the information to indicate that once the General Assembly considered and took action on MONUC, the budget level for the period would be in the order of $2.7 billion. Similarly, the total budgetary requirements for seven ongoing peacekeeping missions and 2000-2001 budget levels for the other missions in transition would be the subject of revised documentation. In those cases, it had been clearly indicated that what had yet to be factored in was the decision of the Security Council to substantially increase the military component of UNAMSIL and the full impact of the revised concept of operations for MONUC, which was finally in a position to actively deploy. That was why the Controller had said that taking into account the additional requirements that might arise from the second phase of implementation of the report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and for the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, the overall level of peacekeeping requirements for 2001-2002 was likely to be between $3 billion and $3.4 billion.

43. In response to the concern raised by the representative of Cyprus, he said that the Secretariat would be careful to ensure that appropriate language was used in the budget document for UNFICYP to refer to the political mandate of the mission.

44. Responding to the questions raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, he pointed out that the representatives of the Secretariat who had been present at the drafting of General Assembly resolution 54/266 had fully understood the wording of paragraph 2 to express the hope that in addition to non-financial issues, account would also be taken of the concerns of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding equitable treatment of local staff. He was confident that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations would take note of and act on the Syrian request.

45. Regarding the conversion of General Service staff to Local staff in UNDOF, he drew attention to the first table in section VIII of the report (A/55/778) noting that since only six of the international staff were in the General Service category, there was a limit to the number of posts that could be converted. The Secretariat would, of course, keep the matter under review.

46. **Mr. Mselle** (Chairman, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the relationship between the 12-month budget and the assessment, explained that the procedure that had been followed before the adoption of General Assembly resolution 49/233 had caused a great deal of difficulty for, whenever the Security Council extended a mandate, regardless of the time period involved, a budget had had to be prepared in the Secretariat. In one year, for example, more than 80 reports had been discussed. The new cycle had been adopted precisely because of those problems. In addition, the linkage between assessments and the budget had been eliminated. Thus, the Secretariat prepared the budget for 12 months, and the General Assembly approved that budget for 12 months. Legally, however, the Secretary-General could not send a letter of assessment until there was a mandate from the Security Council. If there was a budget for 12 months, and the Security Council extended a mandate for six months, the bill would only relate to six months. If the mandate was terminated after six months, there would be no assessment, even though the General Assembly had approved a 12-month budget. That procedure had helped Member States by providing a long-term view of the potential funding requirements for peacekeeping missions over 12 months, but the order of magnitude projected would not necessarily be identical to the final amount.

47. Regarding the allegation by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic that the Advisory Committee had made the same error as the Secretariat in regard to the statement by the Secretary-General that the inconvenience to UNDOF local staff had "since been addressed by the factoring in of a transportation benefit in the net salaries, in accordance with the salary survey methodology" (A/55/778, para. 33 (a)), he said that that information had been given to the Advisory Committee by the Secretariat. It was therefore up to the Secretariat to clarify whether the phrase "has since" referred to something that had been done after or before the adoption of General Assembly resolution 54/266 of 15 June 2000.

48. On the matter of the secondment of UNDOF staff to other missions, he said that the Advisory Committee had paid attention to that factor when reviewing peacekeeping missions. He drew attention to table 2 in the report of the Advisory Committee (A/55/874), on mission staff on short-term loan for the start-up of new missions, which showed that six UNDOF staff were on loan to other missions.

49. **Mr. Mutiso** (Field Administration and Logistics Division) said that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations was currently examining with the Office of Human Resources Management and the International Civil Service Commission ways of making allowance for the difficulties resulting from the relocation of the Force headquarters. The number of in-grade steps for General Service staff was also being discussed. He would give a more detailed response to the points raised by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic in informal consultations.

50. **Mr. Orr** (Canada) said that, while there was broad awareness of the trying conditions in which the personnel of all United Nations peacekeeping operations worked, there had been disagreement within the Committee as to whether the local staff of UNDOF were experiencing significant hardship as a result of the relocation of the Force headquarters. The language of paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 54/266 was therefore deliberately vague.

51. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, on the contrary, the wording of the paragraph was quite unambiguous and referred explicitly to the difficulties experienced by the local staff. He did not recall that there had been any support for watering down the language.

52. **Mr. Gruzdev** (Russian Federation), speaking on agenda item 153(a), said that the resource requirements of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002 were presented on a maintenance basis, pending completion of the ongoing comprehensive review and capacity study of the structures that played a role in supporting peacekeeping operations. In fact, the amount proposed represented an increase of approximately $13.7 million over the amount approved for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. Most of that increase was due to the cost of the 93 additional posts approved by the General Assembly in December 2000. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the recruitment process should be conducted more expeditiously and would be asking the Secretariat to explain what corrective action had been taken.

53. Regarding the workload statistics for 2000, he noted that the number of letters of assist processed had more than doubled compared with the previous year. While he acknowledged that, in many cases, such letters were both necessary and unavoidable, he urged the Secretariat to comply strictly with the criteria for their use.

54. Lastly, he expressed the hope that, following the completion of the ongoing comprehensive review and capacity study, the revised resource requirements of the support account would be submitted in a timely fashion, so as to allow the competent intergovernmental bodies time to examine them in depth. In that connection, he agreed that it would be more prudent to plan for the reconsideration of the relevant estimates by the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly in 2002, rather than at the beginning of the Assembly's fifty-sixth session as planned.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.